

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 02817 261230Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W
----- 115800
R 261200Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2061

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2817

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (SOLARZ, STEPHEN)
SUBJECT: CODEL SOLARZ

REF: STATE 254677

IN VIEW SOLARZ' INTENTION TO HAVE "AS MUCH CONTACT AS POSSIBLE WITH SYRIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY" DURING HIS PROJECTED TRIP TO SYRIA, AND IN VIEW SENSITIVITY THIS SUBJECT AS IT AFFECTS US/SYRIAN RELATIONS, RECOMMEND MATTER BE BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF SECRETARY. FOR OUR PART, WE CONTINUE BELIEVE THAT OVERT EMBASSY INTEREST IN SYRIAN JEWS DOES IN FACT RUN GRAVE RISK OF BEING COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND OF HARMING INTERESTS OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED. FULLY APPRECIATE, HOWEVER, NEED TO SHARE WHATEVER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON SUBJECT. WE SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT PROVIDE SOLARZ WITH INFORMATION CONCERNING STATUS OF SYRIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY OBTAINED BY SYRIAN DESK OFFICER BULLEN DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO LEBANON, AS WELL AS WITH FURTHER DETAILS CONTAINED IN CAROLAN-BULLEN LETTER OF NOVEMBER 18 ON SAME SUBJECT. IN ADDITION, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO DRAW UPON SUBSTANCE OF TALKS HELD BY AMBASSADOR WITH GENERAL SHIHABI OVER LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. MUST STRESS, HOWEVER, NEED TO PROTECT GENERAL SHIHABI. MEANWHILE, WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THIS PROBLEM AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE.
MURPHY

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